

C1 compared to a tensile strength in a width direction of the strips, wherein the strips are bonded together in at least one zone of overlap, wherein said at least one zone of overlap comprises at least two spatially separated bonding points or bonding lines, and wherein the grid has a strength about equal to the higher tensile strength in the lengthwise direction of the strips.--

--17. The grid of claim 16, wherein said at least one zone of overlap comprises at least two spatially separated bonding lines.--

--18. The grid of claim 16, wherein said at least one zone of overlap has a surface area of about a product of a width of the strips multiplied by the width of the strips.--

---

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9-18 are pending herein. By this Preliminary Amendment, claims 13-18 are added. No new matter is added by this Preliminary Amendment.

Support for new claims 13 and 17 may be found at least at, for example, claim 1. Support for new claim 14 and 18 may be found at least at, for example, page 2, lines 12-14 of the specification. Support for new claims 15 and 16 may be found at least at, for example, claim 1 and page 3, lines 4-6 of the specification.

As fully discussed in Applicants' August 30, 2001 Amendment After Final Rejection, the present inventors have learned that forces exerted in the longitudinal direction of a first strip in a grid of strips will automatically be transferred, via the bonding, to forces transverse to the longitudinal direction of a second strip. However, this transverse force is in the direction of low tensile strength of the second strip, and consequently, will cause the second strip to split. The split in the second strip will initiate in turn, via the bonding, a crack in the first strip that runs in the perpendicular direction to the split second strip. Thus, a load in the longitudinal direction of one strip, although not exceeding its tensile strength, nevertheless will indirectly cause early breaking of that strip due to this force transfer mechanism.

Separating the welds in the longitudinal direction of the loaded strip (as shown in Fig. 1)